

NSC BRIEFING

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18 JANUARY 1956

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### BACKGROUND--FINNISH ELECTIONS

- I. On Monday and Tuesday, Finnish voters went to the polls to elect the electors (as we do here) who will determine on 15 Feb who will be Finland's president for the next six years.
- A. Unlike the stereotyped electoral procedure in our two party system, Finland's multi-party politics and its attendant horse-trading means that it is the electors who make the real decision.
- B. Thus, although Premier Kekkonen, leader of Finland's Agrarian Party, now leads in the election of electors (preliminary returns give him 89 out of 300), there is no automatic assurance that he will be Finland's next president.

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II. Next after Kekkonen is the Social Democrat candidate, Karl August Fagerholm, with 74 electors. Fagerholm and Kekkonen were neck-and-neck pre-election favorites.

- A. Under these circumstances, quite possible that neither of these leaders will be able to muster the required simple majority (151) in the Electoral College.
- B. Most probable outcome under these circumstances would be the election of a compromise candidate--perhaps 85-year-old President Paasikivi.
- C. Whoever such compromise candidate might be, he will not be from Communist Front SKDL Party.

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